



ACHAP QUARTERLY



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FOREWORD

As we continue to advance healthcare across Africa, it is imperative that we broaden our focus to include mental health as a fundamental component of our healthcare service delivery. Mental health is an integral part of overall health and well-being, yet it remains significantly underrepresented in many of our healthcare systems.

The challenges faced by our communities, including poverty, conflict, and infectious diseases, have profound impacts on mental health. Additionally, our dedicated CHAs, who diligently serve communities all over the continent, often face immense psychological stress and burnout.

At ACHAP, we believe that integrating mental health services into our existing health programmes is crucial. This means not only increasing access to mental health care within our health facilities, but also providing our staff, members, and partners with the resources and support they need to maintain their mental well-being.

We must work collectively to reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues and create environments where seeking help is encouraged and supported.

Dr. Djékadoum Ndilita,
ACHAP Board Chair.

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ENGAGEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH

In these unprecedented and ever-changing times, mental health has become a critical topic across various sectors, as global events highlight the importance of psychological well-being. We are particularly thrilled to have participated in the East Africa regional meeting on mental health, organized by our partner and friend, CCIH. This meeting was a key engagement for ACHAP, aligning with our ongoing efforts to incorporate mental health into our routine health programming.

The event provided a valuable opportunity to learn how to support mental health programming, integrate mental health into facility and community health services, address perinatal mental health, and provide support for caregivers and staff. Our presentations highlighted our work in maternal mental health and psychological safety in fragile states, showcasing the various ways we incorporate mental health into our community health interventions.

Delegates at the meeting shared their experiences and knowledge on mental health, particularly emphasizing the needs of health programming staff and caregivers, who often focus on their beneficiaries and neglect their own well-being. We were encouraged to develop strategies to ensure mental well-being at an organizational level, enabling us to fulfill our mission of bringing health and healing to all in Africa with the right frame of mind.



The ACHAP team at the meeting.

Thank you CCIH for this incredible opportunity, and for the wealth of knowledge garnered from the diverse experiences of faith-based health actors across Africa.

DAY OF THE AFRICAN CHILD CELEBRATION

The Day of the African Child is celebrated every year on 16th June. This year, the theme was “Education for all children in Africa: the time is now”. ACHAP was part of the commemoration event committee, organised by INERELA Kenya and other partners, whose key message was addressing inequalities encumbering quality education for children living with HIV.



ACHAP and INERELA have previously joined forces to advocate for equitable access to treatment and care, and reduction of stigma and discrimination towards children and adolescents living with HIV. At this event, we had a platform to amplify the 10 Million campaign for PEPFAR, an initiative by the Interfaith Health Platform that ACHAP has been supporting in a bid to raise awareness of the millions of people with HIV who are not yet on treatment. We are continuing to gather signatures for this very important campaign, as we work tirelessly to ensure that the most marginalised and underserved PLWIH gain access to ART, and that no child is left behind.

To show your support for this initiative, please click here: <https://www.interfaith-health-platform.org/10-million-campaign>

We also had an opportunity to provide free screening for presbyopia at this event in an outreach organised by our Africa ClearSight programme implementing partner, CHAK. Event participants had access to eye-health services, courtesy of Jumuiya Hospital, who provided free reading glasses and referral services.



The Jumuiya hospital team at the DAC commemoration event

COVID VACCINATION

ACHAP is pleased to announce the successful conclusion of the CoV-FaB COVID vaccine project, which has made a significant impact across the implementing countries. Through the concerted efforts of all involved, the CoV-FaB project vaccinated over 2,750,807 individuals in 7 countries over the course of two years.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our members and partners who contributed to this remarkable achievement. Your dedication and hard work have helped protect countless lives and bring us closer to ending the pandemic.

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING

In this quarter, ACHAP organised the first webinar in our Health Systems Strengthening (HSS) series, aimed at deepening participants' understanding of corporate governance from both secular and Biblical perspectives, highlighting the unique nature of faith-based organizations in the modern organizational landscape.

The webinar covered several key sub-themes, including an appreciation of the concept of corporate governance, which encompasses the system of rules, practices, and processes guiding company direction and control. It emphasized the importance of ethical conduct, transparency, and responsible decision-making as crucial for maintaining trust. Key components discussed included board structure, executive compensation, audit practices, and risk management, all vital for effective governance. Global perspectives were also explored, recognizing varying regulatory frameworks across jurisdictions while upholding core principles like fairness and integrity.

The webinar also delved into Biblical expressions of corporate governance, viewing leaders as stewards of resources and authority belonging to God, stressing the importance of transparency and responsibility, and upholding honesty, fairness, and moral uprightness in decision-making. It emphasized justice and equity in treating employees and stakeholders fairly and advocated for the marginalized while seeking divine guidance in decisions affecting the organization's future.

We also examined the corporate nature of faith-based organizations, which often prioritize mission-driven goals aligned with religious values in their governance structures. It highlighted how ethical foundations grounded in religious ethics influence decision-making and organizational culture, and emphasized community engagement through service, social justice, and ethical practices as integral to their corporate identity. The discussion also touched on the unique challenges and opportunities these organizations face in balancing spiritual goals with operational efficiency and legal compliance, presenting innovative opportunities for stakeholder engagement. Successful examples of integrating faith principles into governance were discussed, illustrating practical applications and outcomes. The webinar attracted 139 participants from over 14 countries, demonstrating a broad interest in strengthening governance in faith-based health organizations.

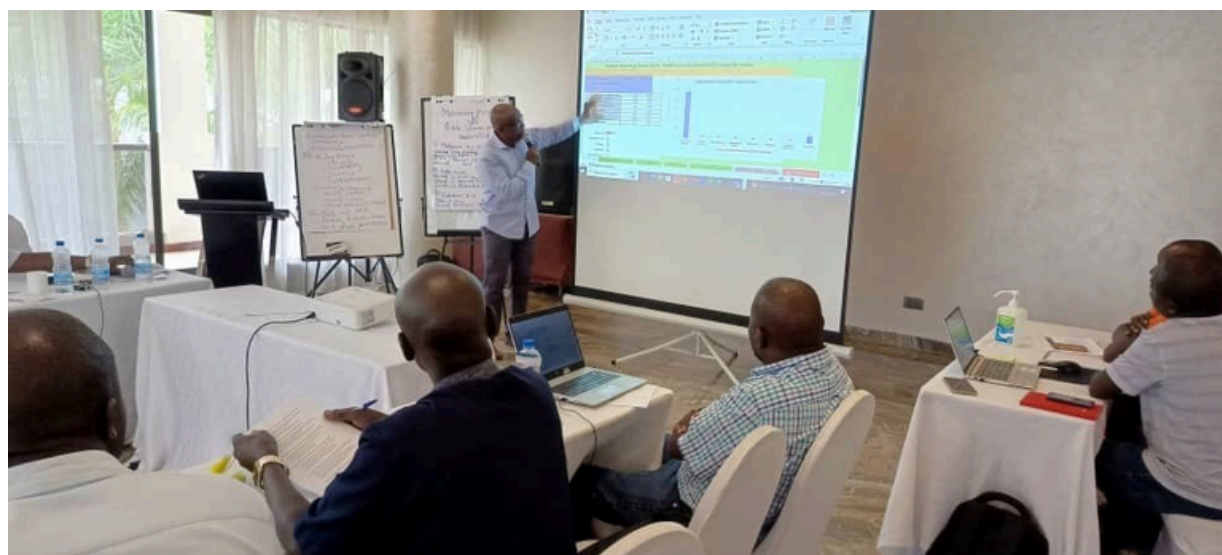
WASH

With support from CCIH and under the USAID-Momentum Country and Global Leadership programme, ACHAP organized a virtual training session for its members on Healthcare Waste Management. The theme of the training was “Healthcare Waste Management: A Core Component of Effective Infection Prevention Programming.” During this event, experts from WHO, UNICEF, MCGL, and Jhpiego shared best practices related to healthcare waste management, underscoring the importance of proper waste management in infection prevention and control. The next crucial step for ACHAP is to provide support to the respective CHAs in designing comprehensive HCWM plans which will be implemented by the CHAs and their member Health Facilities.

CAPACITY BUILDING IN FRAGILE STATES

As the technical lead for capacity strengthening in the USAID-funded MIHR project, ACHAP supported three local partners in South Sudan: South Sudan Child Relief (CRSO), The Rescue Child Initiative (TRISS), and the South Sudan Nursing and Midwifery Association (SSNAMA). In Quarter 3, the focus was on health resilience leadership, an area previously not comprehensively covered. This leadership is crucial for NGOs in fragile environments as it provides vision, strategic direction, team motivation, and efficient resource management for quick crisis response. It also supports long-term development and adaptive strategies for dynamic conditions.

In June, ACHAP and the MIHR resilience team conducted health resilience leadership training for the leadership and management teams of the three local partners in Juba. The training aimed to equip NGO managers with skills to handle operational shocks, foster resilience, address challenges proactively, seize growth opportunities, and enhance sustainability. During the training, the local partners completed an organizational adaptive resilience capacity assessment using the MIHR tool, covering seven resilience parameters. Based on the assessment findings, they developed a resilience leadership capacity strengthening plan, which ACHAP will support in implementing from Q4 into PY5.



Training session in Juba.

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING AT THE ACHAP SECRETARIAT

In June, ACHAP, powered by the CoV-FaB project, organised a Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Training for secretariat staff and member CHAs that was facilitated by the Kenya Red Cross Training Institute. This engagement was necessitated by our endeavour to continuously increase the capacity of our members to pre-empt and respond to health emergencies, including disease outbreaks, pandemics, and health programming in fragile states. Representatives from 6 countries; Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Nigeria, Chad, and Cameroon, gathered in Nairobi for an intensive four-day workshop, where we learned about the processes and ethics of frontline response, and how to create organisational emergency response plans, a task our members are now undertaking.



Training in session

Our work in health emergency response is aligned to the Global Health Security goals, as we take on a leadership role in empowering faith-based organisations across Africa to enrich health systems in their respective countries towards resilience and self-reliance.

Looking forward, ACHAP's future collaborative opportunities with Red Cross include joint programming initiatives, addressing critical health needs in emergency settings, and equipping our CHA health facilities to effectively respond to health emergencies.



Global health security (GHS) is the existence of strong and resilient public health systems that can prevent, detect, and respond to emerging infectious disease threats, wherever they occur in the world.

FROM OUR MEMBERS

CHAD

Our member in Chad, Association évangélique pour la santé au Tchad (AEST), organised a reception ceremony for the refurbished nursing home and the newly constructed maternity hospital in Ndaba village (Logone East), both of which have been equipped with medical and solar equipment. The event was graced by His Majesty, the Canton Head of KOME, along with the heads of the surrounding villages, the representative of the health delegate and his team, the AEST focal point, religious leaders, and the president of the AEST board of directors.

In his address, the President of the AEST Board expressed his appreciation, highlighting the effective management of these projects and underscoring the promise of future partnerships. The ceremony was filled with immense joy and thanksgiving from the people of Ndaba.



Events at the reception ceremony in Ndaba.

LESOTHO

In observance of International Nurses Day, Paray Mission Hospital nurses conducted an outreach to are heading to Correctional Services in Maseru to provide a variety of healthcare services for inmates. Paray Mission Hospital is one of the facilities under the Christian Health Association of Liberia, a champion for community health in Liberia, supporting community-based health service delivery and highlighting the importance of reaching the most underserved populations without stigma.



Nurses outreach at Maseru Correctional Services.



MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS!

Health workers, including doctors, nurses, and community health workers are the backbone of healthcare systems, tirelessly serving communities often under strenuous conditions.

The COVID-19 pandemic, along with other emerging civil and health emergencies in Africa, significantly amplified the pressures on health workers, highlighting the critical need for mental health resources. Long hours, high patient loads, and the emotional toll of dealing with illness and death have left many health workers experiencing burnout, anxiety, and depression. Despite their crucial role, mental health support for these frontline heroes remains inadequate in many regions.

Several factors contribute to the mental health crisis among health workers in Africa; Limited access to mental health services, cultural stigma around seeking help, and the chronic shortage of healthcare professionals exacerbate the situation. Many health workers feel compelled to prioritize patient care over their own well-being, further deepening the crisis.

ACHAP advocates for deliberate efforts to address these challenges and provide much-needed support to health workers across Africa, including:

1. **Increasing Awareness and Reducing Stigma:** Initiatives aimed at raising awareness about mental health and reducing the stigma associated with seeking help are crucial. Training programmes and campaigns can educate health workers about the importance of mental well-being and encourage open discussions.
2. **Access to Mental Health Services:** Expanding access to mental health services is vital. This includes providing on-site counseling, telehealth options, and creating peer support networks where health workers can share their experiences and support each other.
3. **Policy and Institutional Support:** Governments and healthcare institutions need to prioritize the mental health of their workers by implementing supportive policies. This could involve regular mental health assessments, adequate rest periods, and ensuring a manageable workload.
4. **Capacity Building:** Training more mental health professionals and integrating mental health services into primary healthcare can enhance the overall capacity to address mental health issues among health workers.
5. **Resilience Training:** Programmes that build resilience and coping mechanisms can empower health workers to manage stress better. Mindfulness, stress management workshops, and mental health first aid training are valuable tools.



A CALL TO ACTION

The well-being of health workers is integral to the sustainability of healthcare systems in Africa. By addressing mental health needs, we not only support these essential workers but also enhance the quality of care provided to communities. It is imperative for stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and healthcare institutions, to collaborate and create a supportive environment where health workers can thrive both mentally and physically. Investing in the mental health of health workers is not just a necessity—it is a testament to our commitment to a healthier, more resilient future for all in Africa.





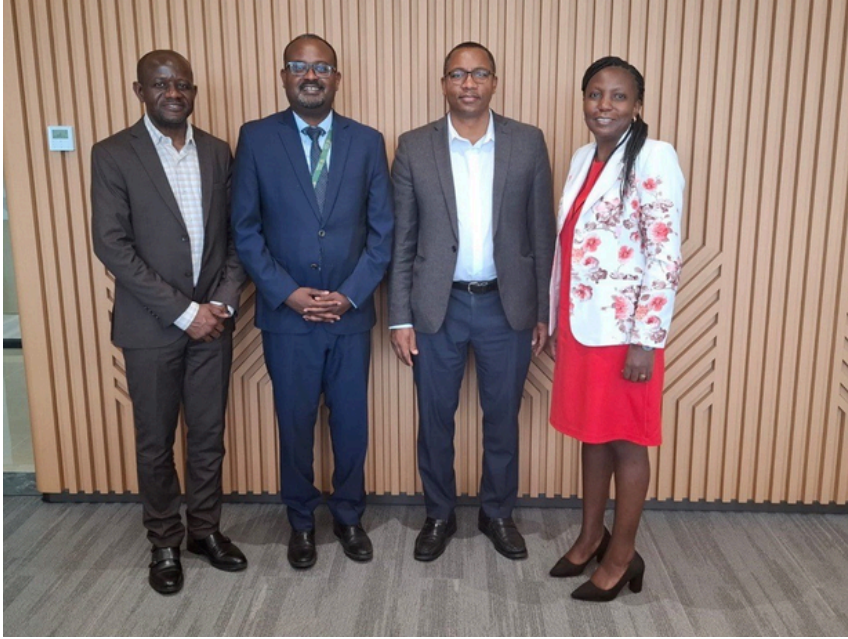
Launching the Kenya chapter of the Africa ClearSight Partnership at the CHAK annual conference in Nairobi.



ACHAP and AACC partners at the high-level dialogue on sustainable population growth and development in Africa, hosted by AACC in Addis Ababa.



Support for the 10 Million campaign for PEPFAR during the Day of the African Child event.



ACHAP visit to Africa CDC in Addis Ababa.



Team building day at ACHAP.



ACHAP and AACC strategy meeting at the ACHAP office in Nairobi.



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